

B.C. students meet the Dalai Lama

This month, Minister Bond introduced His Holiness the Dalai Lama to nine student representatives from lower mainland schools, an all-student audience of over 1,700, and many more students watching online. The Dalai Lama spoke of the need to nurture compassion in our schools and our homes.



Message from Minister Shirley Bond

The Premier and I will meet with 90-100 teachers from around B.C. at the first-ever Teachers' Congress on Nov. 6 at the Wosk Centre in Vancouver. We are looking forward to this unique opportunity to hear directly from those who work on the front lines in our education system.



Minister Shirley Bond
Minister of Education

HOT TOPIC - Work begins on new Social Justice

On September 18-20 Ministry curriculum staff met with stakeholders and experts in social responsibility issues to develop the new Social Justice 12 course. The course will explore the concept of social justice in Canadian society and how we deal with diversity.

Possible course topics could include the discussion of immigration and citizenship issues, such as the Komagata Maru incident and the Chinese head tax, the effects of poverty and the history of racial persecution.

This approach to developing curriculum is not unique. When the Ministry developed the new Civics 11 course, it met with civics experts and stakeholders to develop a framework for the course.

And just like Civics 11, the new Social Justice 12 will be optional. In fact, it will be optional on two levels: for students and school districts. First of all, school districts choose

whether they want to offer the program. Secondly, it's optional for Grade 12 students. The next step will be to take the information from the framework and have a team of teachers develop a draft course curriculum. That draft curriculum will be available for public review beginning next June.

Parents, students, teachers and members of the public will be able to provide their comments on the curriculum by going to www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp.htm on the Ministry of Education website. Public comments will be accepted until December 2007.

At the same time, schools will be invited to pilot the draft curriculum. The Ministry will then consider the comments from the public review and from the school pilots before it develops a final curriculum. The final curriculum will be ready for use in schools by September 2008.

In the 2006 Speech from the Throne, our government committed to engaging in a dialogue with teachers. And we are doing that – in the classroom, during our district visits and at the Learning Roundtable.

The first annual Teachers' Congress will continue that conversation. At the Congress, the Premier and I will hear directly from the people who work with B.C.'s students every day. Teachers will be able to discuss what is working with our education system, and where improvements are needed. I know they will have lots of ideas.

The Teachers' Congress is about bringing forward strategies to improve student achievement. It will involve all types of teachers: public school teachers, independent school teachers, First Nations band teachers and student teachers.

To ensure as many perspectives as possible, we have invited all teachers in B.C. to apply online to attend the Congress. Applications are available at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/edinfo/edevents/atc online.

I look forward to meeting with B.C. teachers in Vancouver on Nov. 6 and hearing their views.



Run
written by Eric Walters

Reading Corner

In trouble again at home and at school, Winston is sent to spend time with his father, a journalist heading to Nova Scotia to cover a human-interest story about a man trying to run across the country. When Winston meets Terry Fox, he's impressed by Terry's determination to achieve a near-impossible goal. But will Terry's inspiring story be enough to make Winston change his ways? For grades 5-9.

